



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

4410-36M

National Institute of Corrections

Solicitation for a Cooperative Agreement - Development of a Series of Publications for the Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems Initiative

AGENCY: National Institute of Corrections, U.S.

Department

Of Justice

ACTION: Solicitation for a Cooperative Agreement

SUMMARY: The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Community Services Division is soliciting proposals from organizations, groups, or individuals to enter into a cooperative agreement with NIC for up to 18 months beginning in October 2012. Work under this cooperative agreement is part of a larger NIC initiative, Evidence-Based Decision Making (EBDM) in Local Criminal Justice Systems. Work under this cooperative agreement will align with the activities of other cooperative agreements providing services under Phase III of this initiative.

DATE: Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. (EDT) on Friday, August 10, 2012.

ADDRESSES: Mailed applications must be sent to: Director, National Institute of Corrections, 320 First Street, NW, Room 5002, Washington, D.C. 20534. Applicants are

encouraged to use Federal Express, UPS, or similar service to ensure delivery by the due date.

Hand delivered applications should be brought to 500 First Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20534. At the front desk, dial 7-3106, extension 0 for pickup.

Faxed applications will not be accepted. Electronic applications can be submitted via <http://www.grants.gov>. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: A copy of this announcement can be downloaded from the NIC website at www.nicic.gov/cooperativeagreements.

All technical or programmatic questions concerning this announcement should be directed to Lori Eville, Correctional Program Specialist, National Institute of Corrections, at leville@bop.gov. In addition to direct reply, all questions and answers will be posted on the NIC website at www.nicic.gov for public review (the names of those submitting questions will not be posted). The website will be updated regularly and postings will remain on the website until the closing date of this cooperative agreement solicitation. Only questions received by 12:00 P.M. (EDT) on July 30, 2012 will be posted on the NIC website.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview: The overall goal of the EBDM Initiative is to establish and test the links (information tools and protocols) between local criminal justice decisions and the application of human and organizational change principles (evidence-based practices) in achieving measurable reductions in pretrial misconduct and post-conviction risk of reoffending. The unique focus of the initiative is the review of locally developed criminal justice strategies that guide practice within existing sentencing statutes and rules. The initiative intends to (1) improve the quality of information that leads to making individual case decisions in local systems and (2) engage these systems as policymaking bodies to collectively improve the effectiveness and capacity of their decision making related to pretrial release/sentencing options. Local officials involved

in the initiative include judges, prosecutors, public defenders, police, human service providers, county executives, and administrators of jail, probation, and pretrial services agencies.

Local criminal justice decisions are defined broadly to include dispositions regarding arrest, cite and release or to custody; pretrial release or detention and setting of bail and pretrial release conditions; pretrial diversion; charging and plea bargaining; sentencing of adjudicated offenders regarding use of community and custody options; and responses to violations of conditions of pretrial release and community sentences.

Background: In June 2008, the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) launched a multi-phased initiative and awarded a cooperative agreement to address evidence-based decision making in local criminal justice systems. The goal of Phase I of the initiative was to build a systemwide framework (from arrest through final disposition and discharge) that would result in more collaborative, evidence-based decision making and practices in local criminal justice systems. This effort was grounded in two decades of research on the factors that contribute to

criminal reoffending and the methods a justice system can employ to interrupt the cycle of reoffense. Today, the initiative seeks to equip criminal justice policymakers in local communities with information, processes, and tools that will result in measurable reductions of pretrial misconduct and post-conviction reoffending.

The principle product of Phase I of this initiative was the Evidence-Based Decision Making Framework in Local Criminal Justice Systems. The Framework identifies the key structural elements of a system informed by evidence-based practice. It defines a vision of safer communities. It puts forward the belief that risk and harm reduction are fundamental goals of the justice system and that these can be achieved without sacrificing offender accountability or other important justice system outcomes.

The Framework both acknowledges the importance of the key premises and values underlying our criminal justice system and provides a set of principles to guide evidence-based decision making within that context; the principles themselves are evidence-based. The Framework also highlights the groundbreaking research that demonstrates pretrial misconduct and offender recidivism can be reduced. The Framework identifies the key stakeholders who must be actively engaged in a collaborative partnership if an

evidence-based system of justice is to be achieved. It outlines some of the most difficult challenges agencies face as they seek to implement such an approach deliberately and systematically in their local communities. A copy of the Evidence-Based Decision Making Framework document can be downloaded online at <http://nicic.gov/Library/024372>.

In August 2010, NIC launched Phase II (Planning and Engagement) of the Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems Initiative by selecting seven jurisdictions to serve as EBDM seed sites. Those sites are Mesa County, Colorado; Grant County, Indiana; Ramsey County, Minnesota; Yamhill County, Oregon; City of Charlottesville/County of Albemarle, Virginia; Eau Claire County, Wisconsin; Milwaukee County, Wisconsin.

The cooperative agreement awardees of Phase II provided extensive technical assistance to each of the seven seed sites for a period of 10 months. The overarching purpose of the technical assistance was to (1) Develop a shared philosophy and vision for the local criminal justice system; (2) Determine the capacity to collect and analyze data, including the quality of the data, to support ongoing analysis of the effectiveness of current and future policies, practices, and services designed to achieve

specific risk and harm reduction outcomes; and (3) Change in knowledge, skills, and abilities regarding research-based risk reduction strategies.

Each site received technical assistance that was specific to the initiative and individualized to its system's needs. Monthly site visits from an assigned technical assistance site coordinator led the jurisdictions through the attainment of specific activities and goals. The Roadmap to Phase II outlines the major objectives that the technical assistance providers guided the seeds sites through. A copy of the roadmap is available online at http://static.nicic.gov/Public/roadmap_phase_ii_final_2.doc x.

The technical assistance was intended to lead to the following outcomes: Build a genuine, collaborative policy team; Build individual agencies that are collaborative and in a state of readiness for change; Understand current practice within each agency/across the system; Understand and have the capacity to implement evidence-based practices; Establish performance measurements/outcomes/system scorecard; Develop a system logic model; Engage/gain support of the community; and Develop a strategic action plan.

All seven sites completed Phase II in October 2011.

Each jurisdiction submitted an application for acceptance into Phase III of the initiative. Within their applications are a detailed strategic action plan and their system's logic model. The action plan and logic model are the foundation of implementation activities of the Phase III technical assistance.

Scope of Work: This award will result in a series of publications that will summarize and culminate the EBDM sites' criminal justice system work. This work will include, but is not limited to, the EBDM site work products from Phase II and their relevant experiences during all phases of this initiative. These publications will serve the broader criminal justice field that is increasingly seeking guidance and wants to learn from jurisdictions that have been successful with implementation of systemwide criminal justice change. The awardee will draw from various documents, tools, products, interviews, and assessments that have been drafted from work during previous awards and integrate them into the project deliverables of this cooperative agreement award. In addition, the awardee will make the revisions necessary to move the first document in the series, "The Framework," from working draft to a final version.

Project Deliverables: (1) The awardee will complete final revisions to the working draft document "A Framework for Evidence-Based Decision Making in Local Criminal Justice Systems." The final document must meet all requirements for publication and inclusion in the National Institute of Corrections Information Center Library. (2) The awardee will produce a series of seven bulletins focusing on each of the major criminal justice stakeholders, which will include judges, prosecutors, defenders, probation directors, pretrial directors, law enforcement, and victim services/advocates. The bulletins will highlight each stakeholder's perspective and its role within the policy team. They will highlight the major lessons learned from the Phase III sites as they worked toward systemwide criminal justice risk and harm reduction goals. The bulletins will also focus on the legal and policy barriers that the jurisdictions faced and the strategies they used while working toward the EBDM principles. The bulletins must meet all requirements for publication and inclusion in the National Institute of Corrections Information Center. (3) The awardee will produce a series of seven case studies highlighting the Phase II and Phase III completed work, products, and progress of the EBDM jurisdictions. The case studies will

include site information from Phase II planning activities. Those products will include system maps, system score cards, logic models, and performance measures. The case studies will also focus on the jurisdictional differences discovered through this initiative that have relevance to the broader criminal justice field, such as changes in policy team membership, lack of stakeholder participation, implementation planning, and starting new programming such as pretrial and diversion.

Specific Requirements: Documents or other media that are produced under this award must follow these guidelines: Prior to the preparation of the final draft of any document or other media, the awardee must consult with NIC's writer/editor concerning the acceptable formats for manuscript submissions and the technical specifications for electronic media. The awardee must follow (1) the guidelines listed herein, as well as follow the Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Manuscripts for Publication as found in the "General Guidelines for Cooperative Agreements," which can be found on our website at www.nicic.gov/cooperativeagreements and (2) NIC recommendations for producing media using plain language, which can be found at www.nicic.gov/plainlanguage.

All final documents and other media submitted under

this project will be posted on the NIC website and must meet the federal government's requirement for accessibility (e.g., 508 PDFs or HTML files). The awardee must provide descriptive text interpreting all graphics, photos, graphs, and/or multimedia that will be included with or distributed alongside the materials and must provide transcripts for all applicable audio/visual works.

Meetings: The cooperative agreement awardee will participate in an initial meeting with NIC staff for a project overview and preliminary planning meeting within 2 weeks of the award. The awardee will meet with NIC staff routinely to discuss the activities noted in the timeline during the course of the cooperative agreement. Meetings will be held no less than quarterly and may be conducted via webinar or in person as agreed upon by NIC and the awardee.

Application Requirements: Applications should be concisely written, typed, double-spaced, no more than 30 pages, and reference the project by the "NIC Opportunity Number" and Title in this announcement. The package must include: a cover letter that identifies the audit agency responsible for the applicant's financial accounts as well as the audit period or fiscal year that the applicant operates under (e.g., July 1 through June 30); a program

narrative in response to the statement of work, and a budget narrative explaining projected costs. The following forms must also be included: OMB Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance; OMB Standard Form 424A, Budget information - Non-Construction Programs; OMB Standard Form 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs (these forms are available at <http://www.grants.gov>) and DOJ/NIC Certification Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; and the Drug-Free Workplace Requirements (available at <http://www.nicic.gov/Downloads/General/certif-frm.pdf>.)

Applications may be submitted in hard copy, or electronically via <http://www.grants.gov>. If submitted in hard copy, there needs to be an original and three copies of the full proposal (program and budget narratives, application forms and assurances). The original should have the applicant's signature in blue ink.

Authority: Public Law 93-415

Funds Available: Up to \$225,000 is available for this project, subject to available funding, but preference will be given to applicants who provide the most cost efficient solutions in accomplishing the scope of work. Determination will be made based on best value to the government, not

necessarily the lowest bid. Funds may be used only for the activities that are directly related to the project.

This project will be a collaborative venture with the NIC Community Services Division.

Eligibility of Applicants: An eligible applicant is any public or private agency, educational institution, organization, individual, or team with expertise in the described areas.

Required Expertise: Successful applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have the organizational capacity to produce the deliverables of this project. Appropriate expertise may include extensive experience in correctional and criminal justice policy and practice, and a strong background in criminal justice systemwide change with expertise in the implementation of evidence-based practices in pretrial release without an over reliance on financial release conditions.

Review Considerations: Applications received under this announcement will be subject to the NIC Review Process. The criteria for the evaluation of each application will be as follows:

Program Narrative: (50%)

Are all of the project tasks adequately discussed? Is there a clear statement of how each task will be

accomplished, including the staffing, resources, and strategies to be employed? Are there any innovative approaches, techniques, or design aspects proposed that will enhance the project?

Organizational Capabilities: (25%)

Do the skills, knowledge, and expertise of the applicant(s) and the proposed project staff demonstrate a high level of competency to complete the tasks? Does the applicant have the necessary experience and organizational capacity to complete the goals of the project?

Program Management/Administration (25%)

Does the applicant identify reasonable objectives, milestones, and measures to track progress? If there are consultants and/or partnerships proposed, is there a clear structure to ensure effective utilization and coordination? Is the proposed budget realistic, does it provide sufficient cost detail/narrative, and does it represent good value relative to the anticipated results?

Note: NIC will NOT award a cooperative agreement to an applicant who does not have a Dun and Bradstreet Database Universal Number (DUNS) and is not registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

A DUNS number can be received at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-800-

333-0505 (if you are a sole proprietor, dial 1-866-705-5711 and select option 1).

Registration in the CCR can be done online at the CCR website at <http://www.ccr.gov>. A CCR Handbook and worksheet can also be reviewed at the website.

Number of Awards: One

NIC Opportunity Number: 12CS15. This number should appear as a reference line in the cover letter, where indicated on Standard Form 424, and outside of the envelope in which the application is sent.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 16.603

Executive Order 12372: This program is subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372. E.O. 12372 allows states the option of setting up a system for reviewing applications from within their states for assistance under certain federal programs. Applicants (other than federally recognized Indian tribal governments) should contact their state Single Point of Contact (SPOC), a list of which is available at

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

MORRIS L. THIGPEN

Director, National Institute of Corrections

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